

Sparking a Culture of Tech Innovation

Summary

How can the City of Long Beach catalyze a local ecosystem that supports the technology and innovation economy?

Challenge description

Technology and innovation play a significant role in the new economy, across the globe, and here in Southern California. Long Beach, however, has not seen its fair share of investment. In 2012, Long Beach only took in 0.4% of regional venture capital investment, compared to 22.3% in Anaheim and 19.8% in the City of Los Angeles. Long Beach is looking for new ways to amplify economic activity and attract new investment in this field. Establishing a strong tech presence in the city will boost the local tax base, enhance the job market for Long Beach residents, and attract new talent to the city.

Technology based innovation is happening in pockets throughout Long Beach. However, the different industries and communities leading the charge are not connected to one another. Evidence shows that without connection, this economic cluster will not grow and reach its full potential. To bridge this gap, the City of Long Beach is prepared to make capital and programmatic investments to connect, enhance, and strengthen a robust innovation ecosystem.

Long Beach seeks to position itself as Southern California's innovation engine - a city that welcomes, supports, and ultimately exports advancements in technology. To realize this goal, Long Beach is seeking to foster a culture of innovation and develop a strong ecosystem that supports innovators, entrepreneurs, research and development. The City is seeking creative, proven strategies to bring together people from all industries and walks of life to find inspiration, nourish their ideas, connect with investors, and reach their full potential.

In advance of making these investments, the City will develop a strategy that details how Long Beach can catalyze a local ecosystem that supports the technology and innovation economy. The strategy will include programming that transforms the entire city into a hub of innovation. The strategy and resulting program and activities will be the glue that brings the innovators of Long Beach together to connect, exchange and inspire each other. When mature, the ecosystem will result in the creation of new business ventures, job opportunities, and investment.

The strategy should also include a physical home for the innovation hub. This will be a place for gathering, activities, learning, sharing, and send a signal to the broader community and region that Long Beach is serious about economic development through technology and innovation.

In recent years, a variety of actors in Long Beach have made strategic investments to spur innovation in the city including the development of the We Labs co-working community, the Innovation SoCal conference, and the maker space studio in the Long Beach Library. The innovation hub should complement and build on the initiatives underway, solidifying Long Beach's culture of innovation.

The City seeks to find a solution that:

- Outlines a strategy for how to catalyze a local ecosystem that supports the technology and innovation economy, including how the physical space should be outfitted to serve as the headquarters for the execution of the strategy.
- Focuses on programming and services that would attract technologists and innovators from different industry sectors and demographic groups.
- Details the capital needs of the space, from layout of furniture to needed technology and equipment.
- Communicates to the world Long Beach's commitment to technology and innovation.
- Compliments and builds on strategic investments made by a variety of actors in Long Beach that have made investments to spur innovation in the city, such as co-working spaces, maker spaces, and programming focused on entrepreneurship.

In the long run, the new solution should lead to measurable increases in:

- Patents applied for by Long Beach firms/residents
- New and young firms in the City of Long Beach
- Growth of industries and occupations based in or related to technology
- Venture capital investment in Long Beach